

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS DON KNABE

April 29, 2003

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) has become a worldwide public health concern. Fortunately, Los Angeles County has only eleven probable cases and none are life threatening.

A second significant threat is the irrational fear the general public has concerning SARS. Recent newspaper articles have reported unfounded rumors about SARS throughout the County. These false rumors unnecessarily raise the anxiety level and harm our local economy. This is especially true in the Asian and Pacific American communities, businesses, and the County's travel and tourist industry.

This County has a responsibility to deal with both threats: SARS as a public health issue and the irrational fear surrounding this illness. Both obligations are best met by making sure that accurate and complete information reaches and is understood by County residents, of all languages and backgrounds.

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MOTION

MOLINA	_____
YAROSLAVSKY	_____
KNABE	_____
ANTONOVICH	_____
BURKE	_____

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Director of Health Services and the Director of Public Health, in close consultation with the County Office of Small Business to:

1. Convene and participate in a Business and Health Advisory Task Force on SARS. It should have representatives from business, health, and media. Asian and Pacific American representation from those sectors should be particularly strong. Other County organizations and local governments should also be asked to participate as necessary.
2. Guide and assist this Task Force to develop a broad-based effort to accurately inform people about SARS in Los Angeles County. This should include how people can protect themselves while avoiding false information and overreaction.
3. Report back to the Board in three weeks, as a set Board Agenda item, on the progress of this Task Force.

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